SMALL PIT SOLUTION

The immediate fate of the McArthur River Mine rests with a ‘small pit’ application to the Federal and Territory Governments that would allow mining in a circumscribed area of the existing mine, says the Territory Opposition.

“The small pit application was lodged with both the Federal and Territory Governments yesterday,” says Dave Tollner, Shadow Minister for Business and Employment.

“The Territory Government needs to give its approval for the amended mine management plan to the Federal Government immediately.

“That will pressure the Federal Government to expedite the small pit application process and give the McArthur River Mine operators the earliest possible indication as to which way the decision will go.

“The small pit option will allow the mine to continue to operate on an interim basis whilst the Federal Environment Minister makes a final determination on the diversion of the McArthur River.

“There are hundreds of jobs hanging by a thread at the moment and I’ve been dismayed at how slow both the Federal and Territory Governments have been in responding to the very real possibility that the McArthur River Mine will close.

“The possibility of the closure of McArthur River Mine dates back to December 17th last year.

“A full month later both Governments still seem oblivious to the very real possibility of a significant component of the Territory economy closing down.

“The Chief Minister keeps repeating the phrase we are open for business.

“The prospect of McArthur River closing as a result of a mistake by Government mocks that statement and puts future international investment at risk.

“Just last year MRM invested $110 million in the operation of the mine.
“Some 500 local businesses get a slice of the $130 million a year MRM pumps into the local economy.

“The Chief Minister is back today – he needs to lead the fight to keep the mine open.”

Further comment: David Tollner 0414 690 109